

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM – 7 P.M.
MINUTES**

Present were Members: Chair John R. Hine, Vice Chair Sarah Etelman, Clerk Bruce C. Forcier, Ira J. Brezinsky and Francis J. DeToma; Town Administrator Michael J. Sullivan.

At 7:01 p.m., Chair Hine called the meeting to order, noting that all members were present.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Since minutes were not ready, action to approve the minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Know Your Town (KYT) and the South Hadley/Granby Chamber of Commerce are partnering to host a free program featuring businesses called “Spotlight on South Hadley Businesses” on Thursday, November 3rd from 7 to 9 p.m. in the South Hadley High School cafeteria, SB Member Forcier announced. The deadline for registration has been extended to October 25th and those interested can register on-line is at www.shgchamber.com.

At the last South Hadley/Granby/Easthampton Veterans District meeting, board members were made aware of funds that are available to benefit local veterans, Mr. Forcier continued. A group of friends has gotten together to honor local veteran Matthew Vieux, who served two tours of duty in Iraq and tragically took his own life. It was mentioned that veterans are a very proud group and not likely to ask for assistance, but money is available. He encouraged anyone aware of a veteran in financial need to contact Veterans Agent John O'Connor in the South Hadley Veteran's Office.

Mr. Forcier offered congratulations to SB Member Brezinsky and the members of Music and Arts South Hadley (MASH) for putting together a great event at the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts (PVPA) School. Tom Bergeron closed by dedicating “Unforgettable” to his wife. He offered kudos to the group for putting on the event.

SB Member Brezinsky confirmed that it went very smoothly, in no small part thanks to the PVPA. He thanked PVPA administrators, SB Member DeToma, and Cable Studio employees Bob Smith and Dan Pease, who spent the whole day videotaping the event so that the performances will be available on line. He also thanked event sponsors - particularly Gerry's Music - for allowing them to offer the event entirely free to the public.

Tomorrow - Wednesday, October 19th - is the last day to register to vote for the state election, SB Member Etelman reminded. Folks can register either by coming into Town Hall or on the Secretary of State's website. Related to voting, KYT is sponsoring two forums on the ballot questions with the first being this Thursday, October 20th on ballot questions 2 and 5 and the next, Thursday, October 27th on Questions 1, 3 and 4.

The South Hadley Falls Neighborhood Association (SHFNA) is hosting its annual Falls clean-up on Saturday, October 22, 2016, SB Member Etelman concluded. It is a fun morning, and they are always looking for volunteers. She encouraged people to check out the SHFNA website or Facebook page or to get in touch with Gillian Woldorf for more information.

He missed an important Thank You to the South Hadley Cultural Council for its role in providing funding for the Jazz Festival, SB Member Brezinsky interjected. MASH received a grant for FallsFest and Cultural Council members were very gracious in allowing MASH to shift that money and put it toward the jazz festival.

Mr. Brezinsky reported on a conference he attended in Framingham that morning hosted by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Over 190 cities and towns were represented, and it was very enlightening. Featured speakers included Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and Mark Nunnally, Executive Director of MassIT. He attended a break-out session on municipal Information Technology (IT) collaboration. The session highlighted two types of collaboration; collaboration between departments within a community and regional collaboration. South Hadley has three silos, the School Department, SHEL and the town. The overriding theme was doing more with less and finding ways to collaborate and do things more efficiently.

With regard to regional collaboration, he was interested to learn that the first such collaboration began in Western Mass: Western MA IT. Although his general sense is that the smallest towns have the greatest need to collaborate and figure out how to do things collaboratively, it is often communities in the Boston area that are most successful in establishing these groups. Westfield has had one IT department as long as he can remember that serves all town departments, including the schools.

Two IT directors from communities that have merged the IT functions of all departments, including schools, spoke. Aaron Hyre, Director of Joint IT Operations at Town of Foxboro and Public Schools, related that Foxboro's entire IT department is under the School Department and administrators do a reverse Schedule 19 to charge the municipality for IT services.

The other break-out session he attended focused on strategic planning and budgeting and featured a speaker from the regional emergency communications center serving Rutland and Barre, where separate dispatch centers have merged under one umbrella. He also sat next to a woman who gave a presentation on Cleargov, one of the transparency platforms.

Collaboration in the area of telecommunications and IT is part of a growing trend, Mr. Sullivan confirmed. The school system and SHELd have been part of the planning process being conducted by Concept Telcom for a new phone system for the town. The School Department phone system has enough capacity to expand to accommodate all the town's needs, although the lack of connections to outlying buildings must still be resolved, Mr. Sullivan observed. He is very close to recommending that the town solve the communications problem at the Ledges by investing in fiber optic cable to the site. He is in the process of getting a quote on that and will probably be recommending that town officials bite the bullet and dig a trench to the golf course, he advised.

SB Member DeToma encouraged folks to turn out for the Falls clean up this Saturday, noting that participants will be meeting in the parking lot across the street from the Roost. In addition, Sunday, October 30th is the re-institution of a very old Falls tradition called the Rag Shag Parade, co-sponsored by the SHFNA and the Lion's Club. Participants are asked to assemble in the parking lot next to the library at 1:30 p.m. Leaders will march the kiddies down in costume to the Beachgrounds where there will be refreshments and goodies for their goodie bags, he said.

Chair Hine asked if anyone wished to address the Selectboard under open forum. No one responded.

Next on the agenda is a public hearing on an application to transfer an all alcohol package store license, Chair Hine announced. He informed those present that the Selectboard canceled the hearing on the advice of town counsel since the applicant is proposing to transfer the license to a premise that already has a license.

3. ORCHARDS GOLF COURSE – REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION OF LICENSE TERMS TO ALLOW THREE BEVERAGE CARTS FOR ITALIAN OPEN

SB Member Forcier moved to approve the request. SB Member Etelman expressed her understanding that it is not possible to modify the terms of the license.

Mr. Sullivan said that he had spoken to ABCC Executive Director Ralph Sacramone and he confirmed that the Local Licensing Authority (LLA) could temporarily vote to allow three carts as long as the carts are not crossing any public ways. The LLA has the authority to make a minor modification, he confirmed. **SB Member DeToma seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0.**

4. REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY DRAFT FINANCIAL PLAN

SB Member DeToma reviewed a four-page financial plan for the South Hadley Falls Redevelopment Plan, offering brief explanatory comments. Costs are broken down into the categories of land acquisition, site preparation and remediation, public improvements and programmatic initiatives, he explained. Public improvement costs are those that involve infrastructure improvements in the Falls, such as improvements to the transportation infrastructure, he elaborated. The last page of the narrative has a paragraph about revenues.

A chart entitled "South Hadley Falls Proposed Public Improvements" lists programs that could be initiated. He described the chart as a roadmap or Master Plan for the Falls, similar to the town's Master Plan. The list is a series of suggested or proposed public improvements phased over 20 years. Each phase is expected to last six or seven years, with the cost of all three phases amounting to millions of dollars. This leads to the question of how the town is going to pay for the improvements, he acknowledged. He cited MassWorks grants, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications, private donations and 40R money from the state as possible sources of funding.

The third document ("South Hadley Falls Urban Redevelopment & Renewal Plan Initiatives & Development Programs/Projects") is a list of programmatic possibilities for the Falls. These include redevelopment of the Bardwell Street library building, redevelopment of 1 Canal Street - the lot across from the library - relocation of the SHELd facility and a proposal to develop incubator space at 27 Gaylord Street, among others. The cost of these initiatives is relatively small in comparison to infrastructure costs, he observed.

SB Member DeToma reviewed a final sheet that laid out overall costs. Contractual Services has to do with a request to the Selectboard and Town Meeting for \$100,000 a year for support for redevelopment activities, he clarified. The estimated annual cost of improvements would be \$2.3 million a year. Except for contractual services, RDA members will have to go out looking for funding, although some funds may be realized from the sale of excess properties. "It is ambitious," he acknowledged.

Members asked questions and offered comments. SB Member Brezinsky said it was not clear to him how the financial piece fits into the larger context of the overall redevelopment plan. Mr. DeToma confirmed that it is the total cost of all work to be done.

However, in order to evaluate the worth of the financial plan, they have to have an understanding of the goals of the plan itself, Mr. Brezinsky contended.

Chair Hine expressed his understanding that public presentations by the RDA to this point have presented the bigger picture of the vision for the Falls. The request from the Selectboard at the conceptual presentation was for specific steps/actions needed to fulfill that vision, SB Member DeToma confirmed. He offered to make another presentation if desired.

RDA members have met with the Planning Board three or four times and with the Conservation Commission and Bike/Walk Committee to make sure that their view of bicycle and pedestrian paths is congruent with the RDA's view for the town, he added.

He expects the plan to be ready for acceptance by Town Meeting sometime early next year, SB Member DeToma said. Chair Hine expressed his understanding that the Selectboard and Planning Board are required to approve the plan, but Mr. Sullivan said his understanding is that neither board is required to take a position if it does not want to. Mr. Harris told him that the Planning Board has to opine on two key factors, that the plan is consistent with existing zoning and one other, but they do not have to endorse the plan.

Town Meeting has to accept the plan, it was confirmed.

SB Member Etelman asked if it is all or nothing. SB Member DeToma expressed his understanding that there could be amendments.

Mr. Sullivan said he thought the Selectboard would have to make a decision as to whether to hold a separate Special Town Meeting just for acceptance of the redevelopment plan since the subject is so complex and the presentation is going to be so detailed. If changes are made, it could come back to Town Meeting at a later date, he pointed out.

In other communities, they have not always followed the plan to the letter, he related. In some cases, circumstances have been such that ultimately the town could not afford it and instead town officials took what they felt was most important. It is like a master plan in that it is able to be adjusted. Often redevelopment plans are brought back to Town Meeting for adjustment.

There will have to be a lot of give and take between the Selectboard and RDA to the extent that the plan calls for infrastructure improvements, SB Member DeToma agreed.

The Worcester RDA has used District Improvement Financing (DIF) for some projects, Mr. Sullivan added. DIF financing is another mechanism that has been used successfully; it allows the town to borrow funds and pay them off with property tax revenues generated by new business brought to a designated area.

Mr. DeToma reviewed the approval process: Town Meeting approves the plan and then it goes to the state for final approval. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has been involved in development of the plan, Mr. Sullivan noted.

SB Member DeToma stressed that the RDA wants all parties – Capital Planning, the Appropriations Committee, the Selectboard, etc. - to feel comfortable prior to presentation of the plan to Town Meeting.

SB Member Etelman requested that even draft information be made available on the website, and SB Member DeToma said he would make sure it is posted.

SB Member Brezinsky asked at what point the Selectboard would discuss individual line items.

If it is the will of the board to have the RDA make a more formal, comprehensive presentation of these items, he's sure they'd be more than happy, Chair Hine responded. SB Member DeToma offered to set up a meeting and bring in consultants to answer any questions.

Two additional pieces of information would be helpful: more information about the sources of revenue and experiences of other communities with projects of similar scope, SB Member Brezinsky said. Also, it would be helpful to know the final goals - financial and infrastructure goals - for when the plan is fully executed . . . the financial picture of the target area today compared to where they want to see it 20 years from now; i.e. - what the hoped for outcome of these investments might be.

Chair Hine commented that the purpose of the RDA is to create an environment that is conducive to business growth. He said he was not sure how they could quantify [successful redevelopment].

Mr. Brezinsky suggested a comparison of the real estate valuation of the target area today with the projected valuation in 10 years. Also, a comparison of new growth post-redevelopment with the rate of new growth prior to adoption of the plan.

SB Member DeToma said he would consult with their consultant and see what they could develop in the way of indices and also discuss dates for a more detailed presentation.

5. **RESIGNATION/APPOINTMENTS**

Due to resignations, positions are available on the South Hadley Public Library (SHPL) Board of Trustees and on the Planning Board for an Associate member, Chair Hine announced. The boards will hold a joint meeting on November 15th to fill the vacancies.

SB Member DeToma informed fellow members that he heard from a resident who was interested in appointment but was hesitant to come before a live audience and wondered if an accommodation could be made.

A similar request was made recently and the response was that it was Selectboard policy to hold an interview with every applicant at a regular meeting, SB Member Etelman reminded. The candidate who made the request came and was appointed.

SB Member Brezinsky noted that there is nothing to preclude an individual from stating in the application that he or she is not able to come before the Selectboard for an interview. However, Ms. Etelman pointed out that members have been pretty insistent in the past year or so that anybody seeking appointment come before them. She is pretty adamant about not making an exception, she said.

Chair Hine suggested that if members wanted to discuss the policy further, it could be put on a future agenda.

6. **LIBRARY INTEGRATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

Proponents have tried to make accommodations for all sides and interests as best they could, Mr. Sullivan presented. There are some tenets and requirements as a municipality that must be upheld, so they did have limitations. Parties to the agreement thought it was a very fair MOU that delineated the responsibilities well. One thing missing is that, if approved, the agreement would start July 1, 2017. If the Selectboard is inclined to act tonight, he would ask that they make clear that the intent is that it take effect July 1, 2017.

Once approved by the Selectboard, the MOU has to be ratified by both Gaylord and SHPL trustees, he confirmed. If signed off by all three parties, he intends to include the estimated increased cost in his budget projections for the library.

SB Member Brezinsky asked if it could be accepted by Town Meeting at the STM planned for January, and Mr. Sullivan said this is not out of the realm of possibility.

He read through it this afternoon and didn't see much in the way of changes, Mr. DeToma said. They strengthened some language in paragraph 3 about the library director having the right to adjust hours and formalized Gaylord trustees' right to utilize the Gaylord Library in off hours and their responsibilities as far as protecting collections, Mr. Sullivan noted. He met recently with AFSCME representatives and at this point they do not object to the merger or creating the new positions but want to reserve the right to see final language; job descriptions, etc. and make sure anyone hired in these positions is treated in an equitable manner with SHPL employees. This has always been the town's intent, he stressed.

Referring to the controversy over ownership of the land, at first it seemed contentious, but, in the end, everybody seemed satisfied with the compromise, he suggested.

Trustees have been given copies of the draft MOU.

He tentatively would say that the increased cost is somewhere between \$25,000 and \$30,000 above the \$35,000 presently contributed by the town. It may go up another \$15 or \$20,000 based on health insurance.

As the agency most directly affected by the Selectboard's decision, SHPL trustees have seen the MOU and given Mr. Sullivan their feedback, SHPL Chair Mitch Resnick related. One of the reasons he is here is to see if the Selectboard will approve the agreement at its second reading so he can get it before his board. SHPL trustees are ready to approve it, he confirmed. He takes his hat off to Mr. Sullivan for the way he has framed the MOU and made the question of ownership something of a moot point, he concluded.

The Selectboard is moving forward under the assumption that it is town property, Chair Hine said. The burden of perfecting that deed is not the town's responsibility, Mr. Resnick agreed.

One of the good things about the agreement is that it preserves the Friends of the Gaylord Library, SB Member DeToma commented.

It is somewhat of a difficult situation and has been for some time, Mr. Brezinsky observed. The MOU “gives the Gaylord Library real confidence in terms of its long-term viability.” He read aloud the last sentence in the first paragraph, which states, “This MOU is intended to encourage an eventual final merger of both systems and should be used as a planning tool toward that end.” He hopes that this goal doesn’t get lost along the way, he shared. An MOU should not go on indefinitely. “At some point you get engaged and at another point you actually get married,” he pointed out.

SB Member Etelman moved to accept the MOU between the Gaylord Memorial Trustees and the Town of South Hadley with the understanding that it takes effect July 1, 2017. SB Member DeToma seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0.

7. MEDEX RATES

Mr. Sullivan presented MEDEX rates for informational purposes. The town moved from the Medex 3 to the Medex 2 plan. He wanted to make sure people saw that if the town had stayed with Medex 3, retirees would go to a \$509 premium, while with Medex 2 they are at \$340.20.

The town will get rates for active employees in January, Mr. Sullivan said. It is a good indication of where rates are going to go. He is hoping the increase will be 8.6% but thinks it will be closer to 10%, which translates to around \$440,000 for active employees.

The good news is that Free Cash was certified last week at \$1.9 million, he noted.

8. SPECIAL TOWN MEETING - JANUARY 11, 2017

The warrant will contain some financial articles and some proposed bylaw changes, Mr. Sullivan related. Administrators may be ready to present General Code changes to the General Bylaw. General Code was charged with aligning the town’s code with state law and making it internally consistent, he reminded. Other articles include acceptance of Lawrence Avenue and other street acceptances, if ready. The Board of Health may put forward a ban on polyethylene bags, he advised. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m.

He would hope to get materials out the first ten days of December. The Appropriations Committee public hearing is tentatively slated for the 4th of January.

SB Member Brezinsky moved to call a Special Town Meeting for Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 6 p.m. SB Member DeToma seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0.

Mr. Sullivan reminded residents that early voting begins Monday, October 24th at 7 a.m. He reviewed the schedule for early voting. The Clerk’s office has the capacity to serve 11 voters at a time, so he encouraged residents to take full advantage of this provision.

Mr. Sullivan summarized the Professional Development program presented last Friday. CAI Consultants demonstrated the myriad of uses of the mapping program to employees, he shared.

Upon motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**LAURA KRUTZLER
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY**

EXHIBIT A

List of Documents Reviewed at October 18, 2016 Selectboard Meeting:

1. October 18, 2016 Agenda.
2. Letter to Timothy O’Leary, Esq. informing him that the Selectboard is unable to consider the application of Amherst Market TK because 506 Granby Road is not a suitable location for a package store, since it is presently licensed as a Section 12 Restaurant. [On October 5, 2016, Amherst Market TK submitted an Application for a Transfer of a Section 15 All Alcohol Package Store License from Marlyn Corporation, d/b/a Liquor Town to Amherst Market TK Inc., d/b/a Liquor Town with a Change of Location to 506 Granby Road.]
3. E-mail request from The Orchards Golf Club for a temporary modification of its liquor license to allow three beverage carts on the golf course for the Italian Open on Saturday, October 22, 2016.
4. Financial Plan Narrative for South Hadley Falls Redevelopment Plan.
5. Chart entitled, “South Hadley Falls Proposed Public Improvements, Urban Renewal Plan.”
6. Document entitled, “South Hadley Falls Urban Redevelopment & Renewal Plan/Initiatives & Development Programs/Projects.”
7. “South Hadley Falls Urban Redevelopment & Renewal Plan/Financing Plan.”
8. Memorandum of Understanding between the Gaylord Memorial Library Trustees and the Town of South Hadley dated July 15, 2016 and revised October 6, 2016.
9. Worksheet showing rates for Medex 2 for 2015, 2016 and 2017 compared to Medex 3 rates.
10. Town Administrator Report dated October 14, 2016.